

FROM THE MAGAZINE RACK #75
JILL STRICKLAND

MARCH 25, 1976

THE FAMILY OUT OF FAVOR (HARPER'S)
50TH ANNIVERSARY OF STEP TOWARD SPACE (SMITHSONIAN)

ANNCR: HERE IS ----- WITH FROM THE MAGAZINE RACK --
SUMMARIES OF ARTICLES ON TIMELY TOPICS FROM MAGAZINES
PUBLISHED IN THE UNITED STATES. TODAY, ONE MAN'S VIEW
OF THE EFFECTS OF POST-INDUSTRIAL SOCIETY ON THE AMERICAN
FAMILY, FROM HARPER'S MAGAZINE; AND FROM SMITHSONIAN
MAGAZINE, NOTES ON THE LIFE AND WORK OF ROBERT GODDARD,
WHO LAUNCHED THE FIRST ROCKET USING LIQUID FUEL FIFTY
YEARS AGO.

REPORTER: IN MUCH OF THE WORLD, HAVING CHILDREN IS NOT A MATTER
OF CHOICE. BUT AMERICAN SOCIAL CRITIC MICHAEL NOVAK,
WRITING IN HARPER'S MAGAZINE, ARGUES PROVOCATIVELY THAT
FOR MANY REASONS, WHAT USED TO BE TAKEN FOR GRANTED
IN THE UNITED STATES HAS NOW BECOME ALMOST A CONSCIOUS
ACT. IN HIS WORDS, "CHOOSING TO HAVE A FAMILY USED TO
BE UNINTERESTING. IT IS, TODAY, AN ACT OF INTELLIGENCE
AND COURAGE." AND HE CONTINUES:

VOICE: "OUR SYSTEM, POST-INDUSTRIAL CAPITALISM, PLAYS AN
AMBIVALENT ROLE WITH RESPECT TO THE FAMILY. ON THE
ONE HAND, CAPITALISM DEMANDS HARD WORK, COMPETITION,
SACRIFICE, SAVING, AND RATIONAL DECISION-MAKING. ON
THE OTHER, IT STRESSES LIBERTY AND ENCOURAGES HEDONISM."

REPORTER: MISTER NOVAK GOES ON TO SAY THAT "URBAN INDUSTRIAL
LIFE IS NOT DESIGNED TO ASSIST FAMILIES." HE LAMENTS

REPORTER: THE BREAKING UP OF SMALL NEIGHBORHOODS IN LARGE CITIES
(CONT'D)

BY THE CONSTRUCTION OF EXPRESSWAYS (LARGE HIGHWAYS).

HE POINTS OUT THAT OFTEN, "THE WORKPLACE IS NOT
DESIGNED WITH FAMILY NEEDS IN MIND; NEITHER ARE WORKING
HOURS." AND HE EXPLAINS WHY THIS DISTURBS HIM:

VOICE: "CLEARLY, THE FAMILY IS THE SEEDBED OF ECONOMIC SKILLS,
MONEY HABITS, ATTITUDES TOWARD WORK, AND THE ARTS OF
FINANCIAL INDEPENDENCE. THE FAMILY IS A STRONGER
AGENCY OF EDUCATIONAL SUCCESS THAN THE SCHOOL. THE
FAMILY IS A STRONGER TEACHER OF THE RELIGIOUS IMAGINATION
THAN THE CHURCH. POLITICAL AND SOCIAL PLANNING IN A
WISE SOCIAL ORDER BEGIN WITH THE AXIOM: 'WHAT STRENGTHENS
THE FAMILY STRENGTHENS SOCIETY.'"

REPORTER: MISTER NOVAK BELIEVES THAT MANY OF THE SOCIAL FUNCTIONS
NOW BEING CARRIED OUT BY THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT --
EDUCATION, JOB-TRAINING, CARE OF THE ELDERLY -- COULD
BE BETTER SERVED BY STRENGTHENING THE AMERICAN FAMILY.
AS HE PUTS IT, "IT IS DIFFICULT TO BELIEVE THAT THE
STATE IS A BETTER INSTRUMENT FOR SATISFYING HUMAN
NEEDS THAN THE FAMILY." AND HE CONTINUES:

VOICE: "AN ECONOMIC ORDER THAT WOULD MAKE THE FAMILY THE BASIC
UNIT OF SOCIAL POLICY WOULD TOUCH EVERY CITIZEN AT THE
NERVE CENTER OF DAILY LIFE. NO KNOWN FORM OF SOCIAL
ORGANIZATION WEEDS (FEELINGS) TO EFFICIENCY IN SO
POWERFUL A WAY. THE FAMILY NOURISHES 'BASIC TRUST.'
FROM THIS SPRING CREATIVITY, PSYCHIC ENERGY, SOCIAL
DYNAMISM. IF INFANTS ARE INJURED HERE, NOT ALL THE
INSTITUTIONS OF SOCIETY CAN PUT THEM BACK TOGETHER.

VOICE: AGAIN, EMPHASIS ON FAMILY LIFE IS POLITICALLY IMPORTANT
(CONT'D) BECAUSE IT CAN UNITE PEOPLE OF DIVERSE RELIGIOUS, ETHNIC,
REGIONAL, AND RACIAL TRADITIONS. FAMILIES DIFFER IN
THEIR STRUCTURES, NEEDS, AND TRADITIONAL INCLINATIONS;
BUT THEY SHARE MANY BASIC ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL
NECESSITIES."

REPORTER: MISTER NOVAK CALLS THE FAMILY "THE FORGOTTEN LEVER OF
SOCIAL CHANGE" AND THEORIZES THAT LEGISLATION TO HELP
THE FAMILY WOULD BETTER THE SITUATION OF BOTH BLACK AND
WHITE WORKING-CLASS PEOPLE IN AMERICA. A POLITICS
AIMED AT STRENGTHENING THE FAMILY, HE SAYS, "WOULD
BE A POLITICS OF UNITY RATHER THAN OF DIVISION." AND
HE OFFERS THIS PHILOSOPHICAL ARGUMENT FOR REVERSING
WHAT HE SEES AS A TREND TOWARD DISCOUNTING THE IMPORTANCE
OF THE FAMILY IN POST-INDUSTRIAL SOCIETY:

VOICE: "APART FROM MILLIONS OF DECISION BY COUPLES TO BRING
FORTH CHILDREN THEY WILL NOURISH, TEACH, AND LAUNCH AGAINST
THE VOID, THE HUMAN RACE HAS NO FUTURE -- NOT WISDOM,
NO ADVANCE, NO COMMUNITY, NO GRACE. ONLY THE EMPTINESS
OF SOLITARY SPACE, THE DANCE OF DEATH.

"IT IS THE DESTINY OF FLESH AND BLOOD TO BE FAMILIAL."

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REPORTER: NOW THAT MAN HAS LANDED ON THE MOON, SPACE PROBES
REGULARLY VISIT THE VARIOUS PLANETS OF OUR SOLAR
SYSTEM, AND THE POSSIBILITY OF A PERMANENT SPACE
STATION ORBITING THE EARTH IS VERY REAL, PEOPLE
OFTEN FORGET THE MAN WHOSE EXPERIMENTS MADE IT ALL

REPORTER: POSSIBLE. ON MARCH 16, 1962 -- FIFTY YEARS AGO --
(CONT'D)

ROBERT GODDARD FLEW THE FIRST ROCKET POWERED BY LIQUID FUEL. THE ROCKET WAS ONLY TWO FEET (SIXTY CENTIMETERS) LONG AND ITS FLIGHT LASTED ONLY TWO AND A HALF SECONDS, BUT WHEN IT LANDED ON THE FROZEN GROUND OF A MASSACHUSETTS FARM, THE WORLD HAD COME MEASURABLY NEARER THE SPACE AGE. MICHAEL KERNAN WRITES ABOUT DOCTOR GODDARD IN SMITHSONIAN MAGAZINE:

VOICE: "A MODEST MAN WHO MOSTLY KEPT HIS SOARING DREAMS TO HIMSELF, GODDARD WAS TO LIVE AND WORK IN RELATIVE OBSCURITY UNTIL HIS DEATH IN 1945 TWO MONTHS BEFORE HIS SIXTY-THIRD BIRTHDAY. ONLY THREE MONTHS BEFORE HE DIED, AS WORLD WAR TWO WOUND DOWN (CAME TO A CLOSE) WERNHER VON BRAUN AND THE GERMAN SCIENTISTS UNDER HIM WHO HAD DEVELOPED THE LONGER-RANGE BALLISTIC MISSILE CAME OVER TO THE AMERICANS. WHEN AMERICAN INTELLIGENCE OFFICERS ASKED HIM FOR DETAILS ABOUT THE GERMAN ROCKETS, ONE OF THE ENGINEERS SUGGESTED THAT THEY ASK DOCTOR GODDARD -- OF WHOM THEY HAD BARELY HEARD -- ABOUT THE PRINCIPLES. [THE DESIGN OF A ROCKET BUILT BY GODDARD IN 1939 HAD, AS HE HIMSELF OBSERVED, ESSENTIALLY THE SAME FEATURES AS THE GERMAN V-2 OF 1944."]

KERNAN WRITES THAT GODDARD ANTICIPATED MANY LATER DEVELOPMENTS IN ROCKETRY. IN A SERIES OF REPORTS HE WROTE IN THE 1920'S FOR THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION -- HIS ONLY BACKER AT THE TIME -- HE DISCUSSED "MANNED AND UNMANNED SPACE PROBES, PHOTOGRAPHY OF THE MOON AND PLANETS, GYRO-STABILIZATION, FLIGHT-PATH CORRECTIONS

VOICE:
(CONT'D)

BY SMALL ROCKET MOTORS, SOLAR-POWERED ELECTRIC PROPULSION, TRACKING OF SPACECRAFT, A RE-ENTRY HEAT SHIELD -- AND THE ADVANTAGES OF LIQUID HYDROGEN AND OXYGEN AS IDEAL PROPELLANTS." THE NEW YORK TIMES SCOFFED AT GODDARD'S THEORIES IN 1920, SAYING THE INVENTOR OUGHT TO REALIZE THAT A ROCKET CAN'T FUNCTION IN A VACUUM. FORTY-NINE YEARS LATER, AS APOLLO ELEVEN CRUISED TOWARD THE MOON, THE TIMES PRINTED A RETRACTION OF ITS ERROR. MORE

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IMPORTANTLY, MISTER KERNAN NOTES, THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT "ACKNOWLEDGED THAT IT HAD INFRINGED ON GODDARD'S PATENTS FOR THE LIQUID-PROPELLANT ENGINE USED IN THE ATLAS, THOR, JUPITER, REDSTONE AND VANGUARD ROCKETS." IT PAID ONE MILLION DOLLARS TO GODDARD'S WIDOW, WHO GAVE HALF TO THE FOUNDATION WHICH HAD SUPPORTED HIS WORK IN NEW MEXICO, AFTER LOCAL OPPOSITION TO HIS POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS EXPERIMENTS FORCED HIM TO LEAVE MASSACHUSETTS. WRITER KERNAN DESCRIBES THE FIRST EXPERIMENT, WHICH SEEMS TO HAVE GONE COMPLETELY UNNOTICED BY THE NEIGHBORS:

"NEAR A CABBAGE PATCH ON EFFIE WARD'S FARM IN AUBURN, MASSACHUSETTS, THREE MEN AND A WOMAN, BUNDLED AGAINST THE COLD, STOOD WATCHING A CURIOUS APPARATUS OF STEEL TUBING. ONE MAN APPROACHED THE THING WITH A BLOWTORCH ON A LONG POLE AND TOUCHED IT OFF. A SUDDEN ROAR, WHICH CONTINUED FOR ABOUT TEN SECONDS, AND IT BEGAN TO MOVE -- ALMOST IMPERCEPTIBLY AT FIRST; THEN, GAINING SPEED, IT TOOK OFF FROM THE FRAME, ZOOMED 41 FEET (THIRTEEN METERS) UP, ARCHED, PLUNGED, AND HIT THE FROZEN

VOICE: GROUND 184 FEET (FIFTY-SIX METERS) AWAY."
(CONT'D)

REPORTER: MISTER KERNAN TALKED WITH MRS. GODDARD ABOUT HER
MEMORIES OF HER HUSBAND'S REACTION. IN HIS WORDS:

VOICE: "'HE DIDN'T SAY MUCH,' SHE RECALLED, 'BUT YOU ASK
ANY INVENTOR ABOUT HIS INVENTION WHEN IT WORKS FOR THE
FIRST TIME, AND THERE'S JUST NOTHING LIKE IT.'

"IT WAS A SHAME, SHE ADDED, THAT BOB GODDARD NEVER
LIVED TO SEE THE MOON ROCKETS WHOSE FEASIBILITY HE
HAD PREDICTED WITH SUCH PRESCIENCE -- NOT MERELY
PREDICTED, BUT DEMONSTRATED -- AT A TIME WHEN THE
WORLD'S OTHER SPACE PIONEERS WERE STILL WORKING
EQUATIONS ON PAPER."

REPORTER: A GLIMPSE OF THE MAN REGARDED BY MANY AS THE FATHER OF
THE AMERICAN SPACE PROGRAM -- FROM THE PAGES OF
SMITHSONIAN MAGAZINE.

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ANNCR: YOU'VE BEEN LISTENING TO FROM THE MAGAZINE RACK,
SUMMARIES OF ARTICLES ON TIMELY TOPICS FROM MAGAZINES
PUBLISHED IN THE UNITED STATES. YOU HEARD TODAY:
"THE FAMILY OUT OF FAVOR," FROM HARPER'S MAGAZINE;
AND A BRIEF PORTRAIT OF THE FATHER OF AMERICAN ROCKETRY,
FROM SMITHSONIAN. NEXT WEEK (AT THIS TIME), JOIN US
AGAIN FOR MORE SELECTIONS FROM THE MAGAZINE RACK.
YOUR REPORTER WAS _____.

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